

**Tennessee Higher Education Commission**  
**Revised Policy - Off Campus Instruction**

**Approved:** November 14, 2002

**Section Title:** Academic Policies

**Policy Title:** Off Campus Instruction

**Policy Number:** A1.4

**New Instructional Locations**

- 1.4.10      **Locations Subject to Approval.** Proposals for new main campuses, off-campus centers, and off-campus sites.
- 1.4.10A    **Main Campus.** A main campus meets all of the following criteria:
1. There is a physical facility owned by the institution.
  2. The executive personnel are housed on-site.
  3. A majority of the institution's academic programs are fully available on-site with course offerings every academic term.
- 1.4.10B    **Off-campus Center.** An off-campus center meets all of the following criteria:
1. There is a continuing administrative presence, as evidenced by at least one full-time or part-time administrator housed on-site, but with the institution's executive personnel housed on another campus.
  2. Courses are offered every academic term and there is at least one academic program fully available on-site.
  3. The physical facility is: <sup>1</sup> owned by the institution, <sup>2</sup> owned by another public institution of higher education, or <sup>3</sup> is provided at no cost to the institution.
- 1.4.10C    **Off-campus Sites.** Pursuant to statutory authority granted to the Commission in § 49-7-202, the Commission shall review and approve all proposals for off-site instruction.
- 1.4.20      **Criteria for Review.** The criteria set out in Provisions 1.4.20A - 1.4.20K will provide the general framework used in reviewing new instructional locations.

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- 1.4.20A **Relevance to Institutional Mission.** The instructional activity of all off-campus locations should be tied to the role and scope of the institution as set forth in its mission statement. Programmatic offerings must be directly linked to the specific mission of the host institution. The establishment or upgrading of a location should also adhere to the role and scope of the institution as set forth in its approved mission statement or part of the current State master plan adopted by the Commission.
- 1.4.20B **Administration.** Plans for administration of the off-campus location should be appropriate for the enrollment and character of the programming offered. In particular, part-time employment of local personnel for registration does not meet the requirement of “continuing administrative presence.”
- 1.4.20C **Facilities.** Facilities planned or in place at the off-campus location should be appropriate for the enrollment and character of programs. In particular, facilities should meet the standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and other applicable accrediting and regulating agencies.
- 1.4.20D **New Facilities.** Whenever the establishment or an upgrading of a location requires substantially new facilities, which may or may not include a land purchase, the community should be willing to provide the site, be willing to provide access to all necessary utilities, highways, and access roads, and a substantial contribution toward the initial planning and construction of the location. The leasing or acquisition of space or land is subject to approval by the State Building Commission and should comply with current State laws set forth in TCA 12-1-106, -107 or 12-2-114, -115 and State Building Commission policy.
- 1.4.20E **Main Campus.** The conversion of an off-campus location to a separate main campus is suspended until May 15, 2003. After this date, the conversion to, or establishment of a new main campus for a degree granting institution should be proposed only after the location has served as an off-campus center and has sustained an enrollment for three consecutive academic years of at least 1,000 (annualized) FTE for a 2-year institution and 4,000 (annualized) FTE for a university. If a new institution is proposed, overwhelming justification must be provided for a separate executive administration.

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- 1.4.20F **Off-campus Center.** The conversion of an off-campus site to a formal off-campus center is suspended until May 15, 2003. After this date, the conversion of an off-campus site to a center should be proposed only after the location has sustained an enrollment for three consecutive academic years of at least 1500 (annualized) FTE for a university and 1000 (annualized) FTE for a two-year institution.
- 1.4.20G **Unnecessary Duplication.** The Commission will not approve the establishment or upgrading of a location if the proposed delivery of instruction services could reasonably occur through existing institutions, centers, or other off-campus locations. The Commission shall not approve any additional off-campus sites at the university level in which the instructional activity duplicates that offered at the community college level, unless agreed upon by the community college and the university.
- 1.4.20H **Service Area.** If a proposed new off-campus location is in the service area of another institution, then the impacted institutions must meet to coordinate off-campus offerings. Prior to contracting with impacted client groups, an institution contemplating the creation of new off-campus offerings within the service area of another institution shall communicate its proposal to the impacted institution in writing. The institution receiving the proposal has the right of first refusal, and should respond to the proposal within 30 days of the receipt of the proposal notification. Disagreements must be resolved between institutions, with input as needed from governing board staff, before the proposal can move forward to the Commission. The governing board will document agreement between institutions when the request is submitted to the Commission. If the impacted institution cannot, or will not, deliver the requested instruction, the requesting institution may request an appeal of the denial decision.  
(Note: On-line offerings are excluded and not impacted by 1.4.20H.
- 1.4.20I **Operational Costs.** Documentation must be provided to the Commission that details the estimated costs associated with the Proposal. Proposed and estimated costs include items such as all leasing arrangements, square footage, utilities, instructional resources, faculty salaries, auxiliaries, and all other items deemed necessary by the Commission. Costs must be estimated for at least one semester if the instructional commitment is of a short-term nature. Institutional commitments past the one

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semester threshold must be estimated for a minimum of one year. Primary consideration will be given to donated, or leased space, rather than space that must be purchased by the institution.

- 1.4.20J **Justification of Need.** The Proposal must include a firm justification of demonstrated need. The proposal should document community or industry support, descriptions of the target population, and the measurable benefits to the community from the proposed off-campus location. Special attention for authorization will be given to initiate instructional activity if one or more of the following criteria are met: <sup>1</sup> contract based instruction; <sup>2</sup> short term, industrial training based instruction; <sup>3</sup> teacher preparation and professional development; <sup>4</sup> allied health training and certification; <sup>5</sup> short term proposals (one semester or less commitment); <sup>6</sup> proposals that involve the sharing of institutional instructional space; <sup>7</sup> instruction occurring in critical counties as identified by the Educational Needs Index; <sup>8</sup> proposals aimed at promoting institutional diversity.
- 1.4.20K **Enrollment Impacts.** The Commission will grant approval to proposals that have the primary goal of access. However, new off-campus locations should not severely offset the institution's current ratio of on/off campus FTE enrollment.
- 1.4 30 **Policy Revision.** After May 15, 2003, the Commission will reevaluate all off-campus instructional activity and policies. After May 15, 2003, the Commission will remove all sites from the active listing in which there has been no instructional activity over the past two academic years. In the interim, the Commission charges each system to undertake a complete review of existing off-campus offerings with respect to enrollment, graduation, self-sufficiency, and duplication of effort. It should be noted that any future leasing or purchase of space should comply with current State laws (TCA 12-1-106, -107 or 12-2-114, -115) and State Building Commission policy.